

Missouri Military Preparedness and Enhancement Commission

Meeting Notes

July 13, 2005

Warrensburg, Missouri

Members in attendance: Bob Welling, Kent Thomas, Rep. Terry Witte, Loretta Charleston, Rep. David Pearce, Dalton Wright, Senator Chris Koster.

Others in attendance: Brigadier General King E. Sidwell, William Benz (for Senator Barnitz), Mike Mills, DED, Shari Wells, DED, Greg Porter (Senator Talent),

Those making presentations:

Jean Othic, Warrensburg Area Economic Development Corporation; Bill Brenner, Whiteman Area Leadership Council; Johnson County Commissioners; Robert Hagedorn, Chief of Staff, Representative Skelton; Bob Wasson, Mayor of Sedalia,

Dalton Wright, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order and introductions were made.

Warrensburg Mayor Charles Rott gave a few opening remarks. Commission Chair thanked the mayor for the city's hospitality.

June 29, 2005 Meeting Minutes

June minutes were amended to add the full name of the "Missouri Development Finance Board" rather than just the initials "MDFB" and the wording of the sentence, on page 3, "Rep. Witte asked what were and where are the navy..." was corrected to "Rep. Witte asked what and where are the navy...".

Rep. Witte moved that the minutes be approved as corrected. Kent Thomas seconded the motion. Minutes approved as amended.

Presentations

During the Commission's lunch break, Mr. Michael J. Schmidtlein, General Manager of EnerSys, made a short presentation to the Commission on EnerSys. In response to questions from Commission members, Mr. Schmidtlein stated that EnerSys had no problems in getting work and is currently absorbing all that they have. Educational attainment of most employees at the plant are GED or high school diploma.

Judge Robin Crouch, chair of the Warrensburg Chamber's Military Affairs Committee, welcomed the Commission and spoke about the economic impact of Whiteman Air Force Base on the local community. Judge Crouch also stated that many of the base personnel are involved in the local community. For nearly 25 years, the community also has a military affairs committee that regularly hosts activities to interact with military communities.

Bob Wasson, Mayor of Sedalia and President of the Whiteman Area Leadership Council (WALC) welcomed the Commission and thanked them for their efforts. Mr. Wasson provided a brief history of the activities of WALC. In February 2004 a 15-

member board, including a consultant (Spectrum Group) who had experience with previous BRAC, was established to look at ways to be effective in representing Whiteman Air Force Base. Mr. Wasson explained that the base has a huge economic impact on the local community. He also stated that they would be relying on the Commission to give them direction.

Jean Othic, WAEDC, presented a PowerPoint on the economic impact of the base on the local economy (nearly \$500 million). The base is the economic driver in the area. Ms. Othic was asked what recommendations on actions the state could take to help the area. She responded that transportation, communications, and affordable housing were key issues.

General Sidwell discussed the challenge of getting reservists to and from the base for training and he suggested that some form of mass transit could be considered. Ms. Othic said that a longer runway would allow for commercial flights. Also need to expand the airport and add hangar space. Also additional job training funds and possibly tax credit for companies that help the military could be considered.

June 29th BRAC hearing

General Sidwell went over June 29th BRAC hearings. He said that we would likely see changes from BRAC Commission recommendations. Missouri Air National Guard had outstanding support from Senators Bond and Talent, communities and the state. All work together in the process. He felt that we were much better off than we were on May 13th.

The Commission took a short break.

Presentations, cont.

Chair Wright called the Commission meeting back to order and introduced Bob Hagedorn, Representative Skelton's Chief of Staff. Mr. Hagedorn said that recent enhancements at WAFB would have a major impact on the local economy – 2004-2005 budget is \$100 million. He also discussed issues related to education for military families. Discussion ensued about Central Missouri State University and strong support by US Rep. Skelton.

Mike Mills, Deputy Director, Economic Development, discussed the importance of making Missouri a location where the military wants to be located. Also talked about possibility of having the military and related industries be a "targeted industry" just as life sciences, advanced manufacturing, etc., are.

Bill Brenner, Johnson County Commission, discussed the zoning issues currently faced by WAFB and the development of a buffer zone around the base. Rep. Pearce said that he would call for a meeting with House Research later this year with the Johnson County committee to talk about the zoning issues.

Chair Wright congratulated the community on the remarkable citizen participation and said that they should be proud of what they accomplished. Whiteman is a world-class base and commended everyone on that.

General Sidwell asked if there was some benefit derived from being next to a military base. It was suggested that Commission should get together with Fort

Leonard Wood to learn more about the technology park or explore ideas that the Commission could do for defense industries.

Next Commission Meeting

Discussion of the next Commission meeting at Fort Leonard Wood. Several members asked about extending the time on base to allow for time at the truck simulator and visit to the technology park.

Media Contacts

Robert Welling – chair should be the contact, discussed who should we send media calls to. Mike Mills suggested that Commission members could refer calls to Paul Sloca, the department's media contact. Rep. Pearce felt that members should send important calls to Chairman Wright for response and handle local media inquiries on their own.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes approved: 26 July 2005

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dalton C. Wright", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dalton Wright, Commission Chair